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ABSTRACT

This books attempts to resolve the debate between the community college critics and defenders on three key issues: the impact of the community college on students, business, and universities; why and how community colleges developed; and why the community college changed its original academic program to become so strongly vocational. Section I introduces the elements in the controversy over community colleges and briefly reviews the theoretical positions of those involved in the debate. Section II focuses on community colleges' impact on business and the economy, elite state universities, and students' access to higher education, educational attainment, and economic attainment; and discusses ways that community colleges may hinder baccalaureate attainment. Section III focuses on the origins and expansion of the community college, including chapters on local-level institution building, state-level college advocates, national-level reinforcement of local and state initiatives, and the politics of the founding of community colleges. Section IV explores the origins of the vocationalization of community colleges, including local, state, and national influences. Finally, section V discusses the policy implications of research on the community college's impact on students and the implications of this research on theories of educational history and politics and political sociology. Contains a 22-page bibliography. (KP)

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